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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

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THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, Washington, D. C.

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER.

JOHN McLELL, ROBERT W. SHOFFEL, BYRON ANDREWS.

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Office: 329 Pennsylvania Avenue N. W.

GUESSING CONTEST.

On page 8 will be found the details of a competition by the terms of which we propose to distribute \$500 in cash, divided into seven prizes, as an extra premium for club-raisers.

It will be observed that this contest is open to all and that this money will be given to those who succeed in making the nearest guess as to the amount of money received at the United States Treasury on Wednesday, January 31 next. There are seven prizes, ranging from \$200 to \$25, in the order of correctness of the guesses. Club-raisers are allowed one guess for each subscription sent in, and it is not necessary for the winners to guess the amount exactly. All guesses must be in by January 29.

In order to give contestants some idea of the probable amount of the receipts we print below the receipts for each day last week, and we shall continue to do this from time to time.

Last week's receipts were: Monday, Dec. 11, \$2,272,144; Tuesday, \$1,274,458; Wednesday, \$1,734,607; Thursday, \$1,855,484; Friday, \$2,020,696; Saturday, \$1,573,546.

The main excitement caused by Senator Billy Mason's Boer speech was in the cranium of the orator delivering it.

THE Boers seem to have thoroughly learned N. B. Forrest's maxim that the way to win is "to get the most men that fast, and get the bulge."

SOMEHOW, there is not such a rush of the European powers to secure "coaling stations" in the Chinese Empire since the United States secured the commanding position of the Philippines.

THERE is something in fraternity. Senator Hanna and Gov.-elect Nash were comrades in the same 100-day's regiment, and stood together in the fortifications at the time that Early raided Washington. Nash managed the campaign which elected Hanna Senator, and Hanna, in turn, managed that which elected Nash Governor.

SECRETARY GAGE has been "anticipating" some more interest to the bondholders in order to "save the money market." He will pay out \$5,076,886 in anticipation of the interest due in January. The money market would have been made a great deal easier if Commissioner Evans had paid the veterans what is due them.

AWHILE ago we said that only phenomenal blundering on the part of the British would save the Boers. A titled blunderer has put his heavy guns at the head of his column and run directly into a trap spread almost in his sight by the Boers. He not only lost his guns but 1,100 valuable men by generalship which would have disgraced an American Corporal.

"COMBINING DIABILITIES." Before the Senate Committee on Pensions Commissioner Evans repeated his astonishing statement that the practice of his Bureau was to combine different disabilities, so as to give a pensionable rating. This was the same statement which so startled the Commander-in-Chief and National G. A. R. Committee on Pensions at their visit to Washington last month, and upon which Gen. Sickles subjected him to a severe cross-examination as to why he claimed to be doing something which at the previous visit of the Committee in July, he had strenuously claimed that the law would not allow him to do, that he had persistently told the country he was unable to do, which is in fact the essence of the difference between Orders No. 164 and 225, and why he had never made any reply to the innumerable complaints which came from all parts of the country that he would not do it?

Making an entirely unexpected visit to the Pension Bureau the next morning, and calling for the last 30 cases rejected the day before, the Committee found, in the second case that they examined, that the Bureau had not been combining disabilities. In that case a man who had been rated nine-eighths for a broken arm, the bones of which had never reunited, and given ratings for other disabilities which aggregated about 30-eighths, had been rejected as non-pensionable. This was the case which the Committee carried to the President.

An army of Congressmen—probably the larger part of the 107,000 rejected last year—could be brought to contradict the Commissioner's statement, by personal evidence to the contrary.

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PENSIONS.

As we have previously stated, the Senate Committee on Pensions—Senator Gallinger, Chairman—held a session in Washington prior to the assembling of Congress, and took some testimony with regard to the operation of the pension laws. The Secretary of the Interior, the Assistant Secretary, the Commissioner of Pensions, and First Deputy Commissioner appeared before them. The Commander-in-Chief and G. A. R. National Committee on Pensions were represented by Col. Geo. H. Patrick, Past Commander of the Department of Alabama, G. A. R. The Committee has now submitted a lengthy report to the Senate. It starts out with the statement that the evidence shows that "while the laws are broad and generous, much difficulty has arisen in their administration because of the obscure phraseology of some of their provisions, and the necessity of certain amendments is obvious."

This is begging the whole question. The phraseology of the laws is as plain as the English language can be made. The "obscurity" is fictitious and factitious. All the "obscurity" was the cunning work of men who did not want to execute the laws according to their plain intent and purpose, and invented sharp quibblings to inject into them. Neither President Harrison, Secretary Noble, nor Commissioner Raim saw any "obscurity" in the pension laws, and they were all of them far abler lawyers than any men who have since been connected with the execution of those laws. Of course, any man who does not want to carry out a law can raise pretexts for not doing his duty, and this is simply what Commissioners Lochren and Evans have persistently done.

The real remedy is not to amend the laws, and give an opportunity for fresh quibbles on the amendments, but to put a man in charge who is friendly to the purpose of the laws, who will at once see that their text is as plain as day, and sufficient for all purposes.

The report of the Committee goes on: "The officials who were interrogated all advised the creation of a non-partisan commission to revise and codify the pension laws with a view to making them more uniform and intelligible, this recommendation being made by the majority of those who were interviewed."

It is also agreed on all hands that the wishes of the Grand Army of the Republic, of which the pension laws are the basis, are in possession of an annual income not exceeding \$250, in addition to the proceeds of daily labor, and that in estimating the pensionable status of soldiers under that act minor disabilities must be aggregated, should be combined with, and the act amended accordingly. In the matter of aggregating the minor disabilities the Commissioner of Pensions assured your committee that that is the practice of the Bureau of Pensions at the present time, and that there can be no valid objection to sanctioning it into law.

Your committee were instructed to report by bill or otherwise, and accordingly bills will be presented for the creation of a commission on revision and codification of the pension laws, for the amendment of the act of June 27, 1890, as urged by the representatives of the Grand Army, and for the amendment of the act of June 27, 1890, relating to the time when veterans' pensions shall commence, later on other bills may be presented designed to remove inequalities and inconsistencies in the laws.

Following the statements made to your committee there will be printed as an appendix a number of proposed bills, 2 and 3 of the act of June 27, 1890, the report of the National Committee on Pensions, and the report of the Grand Army, and synopsis of all laws enacted since the foundation of the Government on the subject of pensions.

In conclusion, your committee desire to emphasize their belief that a commission of learned jurists, one of whom shall be a representative and member of the Grand Army of the Republic, should be created without delay, to take into careful consideration the entire pension system, in the hope that they may present a revision and codification of the laws, and the statutes from ambiguities and uncertainties, and ensure that a code that can be administered to the satisfaction of both the Government and the veterans.

Believing that to be practicable, your committee will press the bill for the creation of a commission to early consideration."

We fervently wish that we could see it otherwise, but this certainly looks to us like more trifling and shilly-shallying, to amuse the veterans, and keep them quiet, until they die off, and their pensions be "saved" to the Treasury. It will take some time to get the proposed laws through Congress, and it is hardly to be hoped that the Commission could be appointed and do its work and get its codifications enacted into law by the present session. If not, then everything would have to go over until the reassembling of Congress, a year from now. In the meanwhile tens of thousands of veterans and their widows will have died, and be out of reach of any law, no matter how beneficent, that Congress may pass.

We repeat that the real remedy is to appoint a Commissioner of Pensions whose vision is so clear that he will see no "obscurity" in the pension laws, and no "obscurity" in the other laws of the Government, English laws, used with their common significance.

CUBAN NEW GOVERNOR-GENERAL. Gen. Leonard B. Wood has been promoted to the rank of Major-General of Volunteers, and appointed Governor-General of Cuba. "This means a good deal for Cuba and our future relations to the island. Gen. Wood has at once the highest Americanism, with intelligence, tact and force enough to carry out his ideas. He announced that his policy will be to give the island peace and security, with good roads, good schools, and good churches. This is all that is desired, and the future of the island is secure. With a strong, inflexible, just Government, administered with patient consideration for the peculiarities of the people, with good roads to give them free communication, and admit outsiders to every part of the island; with good schools for the rising generation, and good, free churches for everybody, we can safely trust to time to make the Cubans all that we would have them be, and 10 years from now people familiar with the old condition of things would not recognize the happy, prosperous country. This is what American freedom will do, and Gen. Wood is the fittest man to carry out our ideas. The best thing is for Congress to hamper him as little as possible, and leave him free to work out the problem according to his own good sense."

There will be now, no doubt, a large

movement of Americans to Cuba, to develop the great resources of the island, and the number will rapidly increase, as the chances for fortune there become more apparent under good Government. The influence of these, in connection with the schools, will rapidly Americanize the island, and make it one of the favored spots of the earth.

THREE NEW BILLS.

Senator Gallinger, from the Senate Committee on Pensions, has introduced the following bills, which will be seen by their calendar numbers, are among the very earliest on the calendar, and consequently will come up for action quite early in the session.

That proposing amendments to the act of June 27, 1890, was prepared by the G. A. R. National Pension Committee, and is intended to place the construction of the law beyond perversion by the Commissioner of Pensions. The amendments compel the combining of disabilities, and raises the limits of widow's income to \$250.

The bill relating to the commencement of widows' pensions is another of Mr. Evans' devices for "saving" money.

The bill providing for a commission to codify the pension laws is a characteristically obscure device to save off any real action on the pension laws.

The bills are as follows: Calendar No. 2, S. 1476, A BILL.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint a non-partisan commission of three members, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, whose duty it shall be, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, to revise and codify the pension laws of the United States.

Sec. 2. That they shall proceed with their work as rapidly as may be consistent with thoroughness, and report the result of their labors to the Secretary of the Interior at the earliest practicable day, but by him laid before Congress. They shall also make such reports during the progress of their work as they shall see fit to the Secretary of the Interior, to be laid before Congress at his discretion.

Sec. 3. That their report shall be so made as to indicate any proposed change in the substance of existing law, and shall be accompanied by notes, which shall briefly and clearly state the reasons for such proposed change.

Sec. 4. That each of said commissioners shall receive, at the rate of \$5,000 a year, which shall also be used to pay the expenses of the commissioners, to be approved and certified by the Secretary of the Interior, to be paid out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Calendar No. 3, S. 1477, A BILL.

In amendment of sections two and three of an act entitled "An act creating pensions for soldiers and sailors who are incapacitated for the performance of manual labor, and providing for pensions to widows, minor children, and dependent parents," approved June 27, 1890, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section two of the act of June 27, 1890, be amended so that it shall read: "That the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint a non-partisan commission of three members, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, whose duty it shall be, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, to revise and codify the pension laws of the United States."

Sec. 2. That all persons who served in the United States Army or Navy during the rebellion and who have been honorably discharged therefrom, and who are now or have been suffering from any physical or mental disability or disease, the result of their own vicious habits, which so incapacitate them as to render them unable to support, shall, upon making due proof of the fact, according to such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may provide, be placed upon the list of invalid pensioners of the United States, and be entitled to receive a pension not exceeding \$12 per month, to be paid out of the Treasury, proportioned to the degree of disability.

Sec. 3. That if any person or enlisted man who served 90 days or more in the Army or Navy of the United States during the rebellion, and who was honorably discharged, and who is now or has been suffering from any physical or mental disability or disease, the result of their own vicious habits, which so incapacitate them as to render them unable to support, shall, upon making due proof of the fact, according to such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may provide, be placed upon the list of invalid pensioners of the United States, and be entitled to receive a pension not exceeding \$12 per month, to be paid out of the Treasury, proportioned to the degree of disability.

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The Bloody Assault on Kenesaw Mountain. The 20th Ind. in a Rerun Struggle to Reach the Rebel Works—Fearful Losses—S. I. and Shorty Taken Prisoner.

"That was quite a neat hitch you worked on the rebels, Col. McIntire," said the General, looking at the Colonel, who was resting from the work of "turning" the rebels, and making fires of the abatis, to cook their breakfasts. You pierced their line and made a great hole, didn't you? It reflects great credit, not only on the brigade, but on the whole division, which has been enabled by it to advance and strengthen its line. It's a great feat, and you're a brave fellow. I'll give you a very thick, with deep ditches, and 200 or 300 feet of abatis in front, and all sort of entanglements. Some prisoners said that the 20th Ind. did most of the work on the morning of the 20th, and that they were the only ones who were left in the line after the assault. I'll give you a very thick, with deep ditches, and 200 or 300 feet of abatis in front, and all sort of entanglements. 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